

THE SIN NATURE AND YESER HAR A:
ARE THEY THE SAME OR DIFFERENT?

Dr. Louis Goldberg, M.A: Th.D.
Scholar in Residence
New York, N.Y.

A copy of this paper has been provided for your perusal. The writer asks that you do not reproduce this paper as it forms one chapter in a forthcoming book.

In the past two years, when discussing basic Biblical theology with Messianic Jewish brethren, the writer has asked whether the Biblical concept of yeser har a or evil inclination. Some affirm that both are the same. Recently, after having reviewed Schulam's commentary on Romans,¹ except for a footnote, the writer has found support for the Christian doctrine of the sin nature, his assessment of the discussion on what is understood as the sin nature, explained on the basis of man's struggle with his to have victory in the everyday experience of living for the Messiah.

This response has set the writer to carefully explore whether the evil in Biblical sin nature or, if not, how should these concepts be related to each other? Is the view of sin the same for the Jewish rabbinic compared to what sin is understood from a Hellenistic state as well as an act, or is sin to be viewed only as an act? And, if these concepts, is the view of man the same in Biblical and Jewish world views, or do they differ.

Because of the size of this paper, the arguments will, at times, be specified, but an arduous effort will be presented, however, to indicate a version of a discussion of this problem in a forthcoming book, A Theology for the Messianic Jew.

The Yeser Har a

¹ Joseph Shulam, A Commentary on the Jewish Roots of Romans (Baltimore, MD: Messianic Jewish Publishers, 1997).

The Identity of the Yeser Har ah

The Evil Inclination an Act of Sin -- T -- This phenomenon is -- This phenomenon is affirmed a each each human being, according to each human being, according to reach human being, according to rabbinic citations. earth earth had earth had become, and that every inclination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil all the earth (Gen. (Gen. 6:5);² after the flood He declared, "Never again will I curse after the flood He declared, "Never though though every inclination of his heart is evil from childhood" (Gen. 8:21); I know what they disposed disposed to do, even before I bring them into the land I promised them o disposed to do, even before I There There is not a righteousness man on earth/who does what is right and ne There is not a righteousness Other passages also are present, suggesting this yeser is a state of sin within every human being.

Origin of the Yeser Har a -- What can be concluded regarding t -- What can be concluded regarding Does Does a pe Does a person acqui Does a person acquire this inclination at conception, or does it appear at everyone possess this yeser? A well known tanna had noted:

"Antoninus" Antoninus also inquired of Rabbi (Yehudah) (tanna, 2/3rd century), 'From w, 2/3rd century), 'evil yeser hold sway over man; from the formation (of the embryo), or fr hold sway over man; from (into the light of the world)?'

"From" From the formation," he replied. "From the formation," he replied. "From the formation," he repli go go forth. But it is from when it issues.' Rabbi said: 'This thing Antoninus taught me go forth Scripture Scripture supports him, for it is said, At the door (i.e., Scripture supports him, for it is said, At (Gen 4:7)'" (Sanhedrin 91b).³

From From this high rabbinic source and what follo From this high rabbinic source and what follows From this sinsin to be asin to be an act within man. It begins its existence in every human being from the moment of birth and is not transmitted from the mother to the son or daughter and is not transmitted from the mother to the son the aspect of the state of sin from the point of view of Biblical theology.

What Is This Yeser?

An Interesting Interpretation -- An remarkable ph -- An remarkable pheno -- An remarkable ""formed""formed" is spelled, vayyiser, with two yods, and the translation is, And the Lord God, and the translation (Gen. (Gen. 2:7). The rabbis have interpreted this word in a curious manner, (Gen. 2:7). The rabbis have interpreted

² All Scripture citation are from the New International Version unless otherwise noted.

³ In the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nezikin, Vol. III, H. Freedman, tr. (London: Soncino Press, 1935), page 612.

opinion was to assert that human opinion was to assert that humankind had fopinion was to assert that human
 Intertestamental Intertestamental period Intertestamental period, it Intertestamental period, it was asserted in the C
 whichever he chooses will be given whichever he chooses will be given to him
 (are) in the choosing and power of our souls, / t(are) in the choosing and power of our souls, / to do ri
 (Psalms of Solomon 9:4).⁹

The Rabbinal teaching in the s The Rabbinal teaching in the second centu
 the familiar words of Akiva, All is foreseen, but freedom of choice is gi
 judged by grace, yet all is according to the excess of works [that it be good or evil] \. (AAbot 3:15).¹⁰
 Many similar passages can be added at this point but
 others exclaim, Did you not give us the evil yeyeser in order to in order to reward us (Yoma 69b),¹¹ and
 also noted, God and his providence determines beforehand v
 him, but never his course of action. whether he shall be godly or godless
 (Niddah 16b).¹² The first Jewish philosopher, Saadya Gaon, wrote that one has joy in , wr
 performing a misvah which represents an effort exerted to subdue which represents an effort exerted
 In other words, God created the evil yeyeser, giving it to each person at
 (already noted above) and from then on, each is respon
 ill.

The Acts of the Yeser Har a

Man as a Rebel

⁸ The Apocrypha of the Old Testament (R.S.V.), (New York: Thomas Nelson, 1957), page 126.

⁹ The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, Vol. 2, James H. Charlesworth, ed. (Graden City, NY: New York, 1985), page 660.

¹⁰ In Mishnah Nezikin, The Mishnah, H. Danby, ed. (London: Oxford, 1933), page 452.

¹¹ In the Hebrew English Edition, Babylonian Talmud, Seder Moed, Leo Jung, tr. (Op. Cit, 1974), n.p.

¹² George F. Moore, Judaism in the First Centuries of the Christian Era, Vol. I (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1955), page 456, and also in the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Tohoroth, I.W. Slotki, tr. (London: Soncino, 1948), page 111.

¹³ Saadia Gaon, The Book of Beliefs and Opinions, Samuel Rosenblatt, tr. (New Haven, CT: Yale University Press, 1976 copyright), page 360.

experience, experience, a dirty involvement, experience, a dirty involvement, experience, a dirty involvement, an a they, therefore, tried to alert people as to how heinous it is and to help people avoid it.

Names that Describe the Evil Inclination

Seven names aptly picture this inclination: evil (Gen. 8 Seven names aptly picture this inclination: unclean (Psalm 51:12), fiend (or enemy) (Proverbs 15:31), obstacle (Isa. 57:14), stone (Psalm 51 and and stench, smell (Joel 2:20) (Sukkah 52a).²³ These are only few of the descriptive titles of yeser har a, and what, and what is accomplished through this evil influence, either directly or indirectly. Inclination says nothing to warn a person of impending danger and contamination. Inclination says nothing other times, the person is enticed to commit acts contrary to other times, the person is enticed to commit acts contrary to what is regarded as an act committed by the individual who gives himself over to this regarded as an act committed by har a.

Warning by Leaders

The rabbis warn against the intentions of the evil inclination, not only against the intentions but also one must be aware of its subtle ways. In one description, this inclination is like a traveler, who becomes the welcome guest, and finally, turns over to this cruel taskmaster who will exact obedience and become the master of the house over to this cruel taskmaster (Gen. Rabba, 22:6).²⁴ In another description, the yeser har a entangles the person, at first, in a very insignificant and light way, even as the thin thread of a cobweb. But once a person begins to entertain this evil yeser, the pull takes on the dimensions of a strong rope, making it impossible in the end for one to be free (Gen. Rabbah, 22:6).²⁵

Why the Presence of the Yeser Har a?

The question may well be asked as to why God would create such a rabbinical opinion affirms it is for man's own good. Vitzthum there is positive side to the fact that God created man with yeser har a, for its very presence in man is, for a reason to mitigate his punishment for sinning" and cites a Talmud source according to R. Hama,

²³ In the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Mo'ed, Vol. VI, I. Slotki, tr. (Op. Cit., 1938), pages 247, 248.

²⁴ Genesis Rabba Vol. I, H. Freedman, tr. (London, Soncino, n.d.), page 185.

²⁵ Gen. Rabba, Ibid.

"If not for several verses that tell that the Almighty placed the yeser har a in our soul, the feet of our enemies would totter at the judgment."

And Rashi comments:

"Our feet would totter at the judgment but now our feet do not totter since He created the yeser har a" (Berachot 32a; Sukkah 52b).²⁶

Of course, Vizner goes on to affirm that we must understand that we are not causing a person to sin, and cites another source who explains:

"It is not proper to claim that we have an excuse, for man is given free choice. Rashi's intention: We have somewhat of an excuse on the day of judgment, and our intention: We won't collapse entirely, since He created the yeser har a that we should be victorious in our judgment" (Maharsha, commentary Berachot, ibid.).²⁷

What is interesting, concerning the statement, "If you will, you can be righteous" (Job 10:7), (although the literal translation is, "According to your knowledge, you can be righteous" (Job 10:7), (although the NASV), Rashi stated as a comment, "Job tried to annul the judgment of the entire world by proclaiming ... We were forced [to sin] because of the yeser har a that You created. If You willed it, I would not have done evil" (Baba Batra 16a).²⁸ A comment by a Rav maintained that "Job denied that his circumstances of birth and by his nature ..." ²⁹

From this discussion, even the rabbis realized that if God can make a person be fully responsible for the deeds he can make a person be fully responsible for the deeds he can make. Nevertheless, as we shall yet note, God did have a purpose for this burden He placed on mankind.

Some have even gone so far as to say that if not for the evil impulse, no man could build a house, marry a wife, have children, or engage in any activity. Solomon declared "All labor and all achievement spring from the evil impulse." ³⁰

²⁶ Vizner, Op. Cit., page 91; also respectively, in the Hebrew English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud, Op. Cit., n.p. and in the Babylonian Talmud, Op. Cit., pages 250, 251.

²⁷ Vizner, Ibid.

²⁸ Ibid., as well as in the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nezikin, Vol. II., M. Simon., tr., (Op. Cit., 1935), pages 79, 80.

²⁹ Vizner, Ibid.

4:4,4:4, Gen. Rabba 9:7; and EccEccles. Rabba on Eccles. 3:11).³⁰ The conclusion is that the passions within a man are an extremely essential element, necessary for the man are an extremely essential element, necessary for the existence of civilization. Therefore, the evil yeser is not to be eradicated or suppressed is not to be eradicated and controlled (Sanhedrin 107b; Sotah 47a).³¹

How Does One Subdue the Yeser Har a?

After having noted the acts and struggle with the evil inclination After having noted the acts and struggle with the evil inclination victory over it that a person can cease to be a rebel before God. Rabbivictory over it that a person can number of facets.

Yeser HaTov

Already noted is the suggestion of the two inclinations because of the two yodys for ת for the HebrewHebrew word, formed (Gen. 2:7), thereby allowing for the goodHebrew word, formed (Gen. 2:7), ת addition,addition, mention was also made of the use of the Hebrew word for "heart" with twoaddition, mention was also a double portion or even a double-mindedness is indicated, and when a double portion or even a double-portion is understood as being single-minded. The argument therefore in the commentariesDeuteronomy,Deuteronomy, in the command, Love the Lord your God with all your heart, (bekhal lbekhal lebalal) this is interpreted to mean, With both your Inclinations, the Inclination to good and the Inclination to evil. evil. (MisMishna Mishna Berakot 9:5).³² The rabbis therefore saw the possibility whereby man could have alternative choices with his inclinations. The only problem is that the evil alternative choices with his inclination at birth while the yeser hatov is not activated until the boy becomes a bar misvah; the inclination to evil already has a head start of some thirteen years over the yeser hatov.

Because of this head start by the yeser har a, the yeser hatov is described in several ways is described in several ways example being pertinent,

³⁰ In Gen. Rabba, Vol. I, H. Freedman, tr. (Op. Cit., n.d.), page 68, and in Midrash Rabba, Ruth, Eccl. Vol. 8 (London: Soncino, 1939), pages 91, 92.

³¹ Moore, Op. Cit. page 483, and also respectively, in the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nezikin Vol. III, Op. Cit., pages 736, 737 and in the Hebrew English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nashim, A. Cohen, tr. (London: Soncino, 1985), n.p.

³² Sifre, Op. Cit., Piska 32, page 59; see also The Mishnah, Op. Cit., page 10.

(Gen. 14:22); Boaz (Ruth 3:13); David (1 Sam. 26:11); Boaz (Ruth 3:13); David (1 Sam. 26:11) do likewise when addressing their evil impulse so as to do wrong, as did Gehazi (II Kings 5:20).³⁵

The Use of Torah -- -- The best possibility to control the evil inclination is to spend considerable time with the Torah of God. Note how the wisdom literature again considers considerable time with the Torah compared to medicine that preserves compared to medicine that preserves them/and health to a man's whole body (Prov. 4:20-22; Erubim 54a).³⁶

The Deeds of Loving Kindness -- Still another attempt to -- Still another attempt to control the evil inclination is through doing the works of loving kindness. So through doing the works of loving kindness. So the sages say, such as, Blessed are Israel as long as they are devoted to the such as, Blessed are Israel as long as they are devoted to the works of loving kindness, the evil yeser is delivered into their hands (Abodah Zarah 5b).³⁷

Prayer as a Potent Protector -- Another possibility were the various prayers offered by rabbis and people so as to have victory over the yeser har a. In one instance, a R. Judah said that if a man prays to God, God could save him from the evil yeser (Berachoth 16b).³⁸ Other prayers are stated for example, God should make it possible for us to do His will (Berachoth 17b).³⁹ The Rabbis also prayed, May it be thy will that we shall not be put to shame (not be put to shame (Berachoth 17b).⁴⁰ Here the prayer is directed against the evil inclination. Prayer should also be offered that the individual can be led by the good inclination. As already noted, the heart plays a very important part in a person's life, especially when the word for heart has two bets; so the Rabbis pray; so the Rabbis prayed, May a fear of thy name remove us from all thou hatest. Bring a righteous righteousness for thy Name's sake.⁴¹ The prayers of the Eighteen Benedictions

³⁵ R. Josiah, Sifre, Op. Cit., Piska 33, pages 62, 63.

³⁶ In the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Moed, I.W. Slotki, tr. (Op. Cit., 1938), pages 375, 376.

³⁷ Ibid., Seder Nezikin Vol. IV, A. Mishcom, tr. (Op. Cit., 1935), page 22.

³⁸ In the Hebrew English Edition of the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Zeraim, M. Simon, tr. (London: Sincino, 1960), n.p.

³⁹ Ibid.

⁴⁰ Ibid.

⁴¹ S. Schechter, Op. Cit. Page 279.

oneone to pray for God s help to bring hione to pray for God s help to bring him andone to pray for God s help
the place of repentance.⁴²

Did God Regret Creating the Evil Yeser?

On the statement in Scripture, The Lord was grieved that On the statement in Scripture, The Lord wa
hishis heart was filled with pain (Gen. 6:6), the traditional commehis heart was filled with pain (Gen. 6:6),
wordswords mean: Had I had not created him with the yeser har a, he would not have , he would not have rebell
(Bereshith Rabbah 27:4).⁴³ While the Rabbis recognized the proble While the Rabbis recognized the problem
continuallycontinually made the wrong choices, but they acontinually made the wrong choices, but they also
standardstandard of behavior, the yeser har a arri arrives arrives on the scene as, quite literally, a devil s advocate (
ZarahZarah 3a).⁴⁴ But, one must also rec But, one must also recognize that But, one must also recognize
point,point, man should make the right point, man should make the right choices and thpoint, man should make th
byby the Rabbinby the Rabbinical leaderby the Rabbinical leaders was that man should be engaged in killing
doing,doing, he could vindicate God sdoing, he could vindicate God s trustdoing, he could vindicate God s trust in
he can have His help as well as that of the yeser hatov.

Final Destruction of the Yeser Har a

Man s struggle with the yeser har a will cease one day will cease one day when t will cease one day wh
HolyHoly One, blessed be he, will bring the evil yeser and kill him in the presence both of the righteous and
thethe wicked. (Sukkah 52a).⁴⁵ In the discussion regarding this passage, the righteous and unrighteous
viewview the evil iview the evil inclination view the evil inclination in an interesting contrast: the righteous see
bigbig mountain and they will ask how they were able to overcome such an obstacle.big mountain and they will a
thethe wicked, the evil inclination will be as a thin hair and their comment will be that they should have
beenbeen strong enough to defeat such an insignificant impbeen strong enough to defeat such an insignificant
willwill be on a dwill be on a day when Israel wwill be on a day when Israel will finally be restored to their
good.good. The Lord wigood. The Lord will remove all folly from the hearts of his children and the yeser h

⁴² Siddur for Messianic Jews, John Fischer, David Bronstein, eds., (Palm Harbor, FL: Menorah Ministries, 1988), pages 46-59.

⁴³ Gen. Rabba, Op. Cit., page 221, 222.

⁴⁴ In the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Nezikin, Vol. IV, pages 6, 7.

⁴⁵ Ibid. , Seder Moed, Vol. VI, I.W. Slotki, tr. (Op. Cit., 1938), pages 246, 247.

from this world. The yeseyeser hatov will counsel people to love the Lord their God with all their hearts and all their souls, that their lives may last forever.⁴⁶

Pertinent Questions Concerning Yeser Har a

The implication is already noted: If sin is regarded only as act, and not a state of being. The implication leads to acts of sin, then does it mean that man can finally achieve victory over his evil inclination thereby earn his own atonement from sin? Does this mean that a person can, by subduing his or her yeser har a, be actually declared righteousness by God?

To this issue we need to address ourselves in tackling the. To this issue we need to address ourselves in an equivalent to all that is wrong with a person or whether something more serious man.

The Sin Nature

The attempt now will be to consider what is a most basic theology: Who is man, prior to his fall, and what happened afterward. Before would be good to examine what are some of the observations would be good to examine what are some of the one Jewish believer in particular.

What Non-Jewish People Say

Two scholars who had become quite well known for their studies in Jewish. Two scholars who had whom many turn to consider their observations on this particular subject.

George F. Moore -- Moore had declared regarding the basic nature of man,

There is no notion that the original constitution consequence of the fall, so that he transmitted to his descendants a vitiated nature, appetites and passions necessarily prevail over reason and virtue, while the will is enfeebled or wholly impotent.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ S. Schechter, Op. Cit., page 291, citing Pseudo-Jonathan on Deut., 30:4.

⁴⁷ G.E. Moore. Op. Cit. page 479.

Moore further insisted that with man's yeser hara, a person is not only include the concept but a point only include the conception but time, the heart, as generally in Hebrew, is the organ of affections. He further observed that the choices that they make are evil, much less in themselves sin, but evil from their effect on them to consciously unlawful acts.⁴⁸

W. D. Davies -- Davies echoes the same sentiments⁴⁹ although he seems to be with some dimension of the problem of sin for example, in citing IV Ezra,

For what good is to all that they live in sorrow now and expect Adam, what have you done? For though it was you who sinned, the but ours also who are your descendants. For what promised us, but we have miserably failed? Or that reserved for us, but we have miserably failed.⁵⁰

In commenting on these last statements, Davies reflects how Adam is accused of somehow involved the race in perdition, but then, a struggle appears. Nevertheless, in verses 127-129 and in 8:56, the author recognizes of II Baruch and there is an evident incongruity in his thought although in a less pointed form and all the Rabbinical teaching on Sin. That Adam involved all his posterity, the righteous as well as the wicked, Rabbis were always anxious to safeguard human freedom, and so could not between Adam's sin and the sinfulness of mankind as directly causal ... the Rabbis do exactly how, apart from the infliction of death, the sin of Adam affected all men ...⁵¹

Davies still reflects some kind of a second thought in his thinking when he declares,

⁴⁸ Ibid., pages 480, 482ff.

⁴⁹ W.D. Davies, Paul and Rabbinic Judaism. Some Rabbinic Elements in Rabbinic Theology (New York: Harper and Row, 1948), page 33.

⁵⁰ The Old Testament Pseudepigrapha, II James A. Charlesworth, ed. (New York: Doubleday, 1983), lines 117-119, page 541.

⁵¹ W.D. Davies, Op. Cit. Pages 33, 34.

It is impossible to maintain the traditional teaching of original sin ... Berkhof is not satisfied with the rejection of the usefulness of traditional doctrine. He wrestles with the rejected formulations for the description of the struggle in man with evil.⁵⁵

He comments further,

It is anyway a remarkable fact that a Christian theologian mainstream of Christianity, cannot make use any longer of the traditional mainstream of Christianity to describe the tension in man, as man has to go outside the traditional framework, for it is no longer sufficient.⁵⁶

It would appear from this assessment of Berkhof's observations, Stuart agreed and would appear from his book to discuss in his book his full support of Rabbinic convictions. It is conceivable that Paul made use of a concept of the power of evil in man that of that of the Rabbis, but was expressed in different terminology,⁵⁷ which sounds almost similar to what Davies had written.

So, from a number of modern so-called Christians describe the acts of sin and the concept of sin as a state to explain the human condition.

A Biblical Consideration of the Sin Nature

Our task is to now consider carefully. Our task is to now consider carefully. Our task is to now consider the basic problem with humankind and several key Scripture passages will be examined.

Genesis 3

God had instructed Adam, and Eve was also later charged, that they were free to eat of any fruit of any tree in the garden except the fruit of any tree in the garden. The amount of descriptive information was provided by Gamou would then surely die (Gen.2:17).

⁵⁵ G.H. Cohen Stuart, The Struggle in Man Between Good and Evil: An Inquiry Into the Origin of the Rabbinic Concept of Yeser Rah a (Kampen: J.H. Kok, 1984), pages 1, 2.

⁵⁶ Cohen Stuart, Op. Cit. page 2.

⁵⁷ Cohen Stuart, Ibid. Page 4.

One aspect of the judgment was physical death, not only for Adam and Eve eventually, One aspect of t waswas a facet pwas a facet passed on to all their descendants. On this point, Jewish and Christian scholars agree. isis this all the information entails this all the information entaiis this all the information entailed in God s d intended, although Genesis 3 does not fully spell it out.

The clue to the predicament in which Adam and Eve found themselves immediately after th The clue t FallFall lieFall lies in the slaughter of animal(s), first, for properly clothing our first parents. The word usedFall lie forfor cover (Gen. 3:21) is the Hebrew lavash, not , not for the , not for the purpose of atonement, but instead AdamAdam and Eve. However, Adam and Eve. However, the factAdam and Eve. However, the fact that God and while it is not directly asserted, the possibility for it needs to be entertained.

When Adam and Eve made the choice of choosing to eat When Adam and Eve made the choice of choo and evil, they took themselves out of the circle of God s will, as illustrated:

TheirTheir choice had created a barrieTheir choice had created a barrier between theTheir choice had created a forfor Adam, both he and Eve ran to hide themselves, a facet of behavior for Adam, both he and Eve entertained.

We note further from the d We note further from the diagram We note further from the diagram parents,parents, Adam s descendants have sought to return to the circle of God s will. Subsequentparents, Adam .

centuries, centuries, as other religions developed, in isis to come is to come back into a fellowship with God and communicate with him. However, no return possible possible based on one's efforts or whatever religion a person possess. Rather, the return possible based on of God's will is based upon an expiatory sacrifice of God's will is based upon an expiatory sacrifice Eden, Eden, the animals that were killed were for the purpose of providing an atonement for the Eden, the first parents so as to enable them to establish a proper fellowship with God once more.

The necessity of providing for an expiatory sacrifice pointed to a facet of drastically wrong; more than mere physical death, as serious as that was. By Adam and Eve out of the garden so as to not permit them or their descendants to also partake of the Tree of life and eat, and live forever (Gen. 3:22). Adam and Eve passed on to their descendants, namely, a sin nature. And, to partake of this physical and spiritual death as part of th compounded, whereby humankind would live forever with this state of affairs, with no possibility of redemption.

Delitzsch noted,

But after he had fallen through sin into immortality could only do him harm. For immortality in the state of sin is not the eternal which God designed for man, but which God designed for man (Rev. 2:11; 20:6, 14; 21:8).⁵⁸

This commentator concluded that the expulsion of man from the Garden, the possibility existed to respond, make a choice to receive the truth as it was shared and then have eternal life.

While many may not agree with all that can be said about the tree of good and evil, nevertheless, these are the facets of God's revelation in His Word, for the expansion of sin as a state that leads to acts of sin.

Leviticus 4

⁵⁸ C.F. Keil & F. Delitzsch, Biblical Commentary on the Old Testament, The Pentateuch, Vol. 1, James Martin, tr. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1951), page 107.

With the enactment of the Mosaic covenant With the enactment of the Mosaic covenant o With the en of of the of the sin offering in Leviticus 4, one facet of the state of sin, or sin nature, is explained of the sin offer offering offering of offering of the sin offering. Of the five Levitical offerings presented to God, it was the fi offered at the altar and had an unique emphasis.

God provided through Moses what was be special about this God provided through Moses what was When anyone sins unintentionally (bishgagah) and does what is) and does what is for) and does commancommands commands (Lcommands (Lev. 4:2). The key for this sacrifice lies in an understanding of or sin committed through ignorance.

The Scriptures provide numerous examples of sins of commission as well a The Scriptures pro omission. omission. In the former, the sin omission. In the former, the sin of commission de omission. In the f notnot to commit a specific sin, chose not to commit a specific sin, chose to do snot to commit a specific sin, sin.sin. In the sins of omission, when the person knows what is the good thisin. In the sins of omission, v deliberatelydeliberately fails to do so, is also guilty of committing sdeliberately fails to do so, is also guilty of cor sin committed through ignorance?

It would appear a person is up against something within him It would appear a person is up against s realizerealize its full impact. The question can then realize its full impact. The question can then be asked: realiz knowknow it? Asknow it? Assuredly, people do. Such a situation is not even due to the yeser har a where one thethe decision in the heart and then proceedthe decision in the heart and then proceeds to commit wrong something something more basic is wrong, a factor that lies deep within the person as something more basic is wro dimensiondimension that is designated the state of sin. So, either the person realize of sin. So, either the pe hashas been committed, or someone has to remind him or her of the wrong has been committed, or someone ha that prompts the person to unintentional sin.

The Rabbis were very skittish in speaking of the offer of sacrifices, The Rabbis were very skittish in decisionsdecisions rendered at the council of Yavne (70-90 C.E) but nevertheless, the s (70-90 C.E) but neverth bebe ignored. Schechter stated It shoube ignored. Schechter stated It should bebe ignored. Schechter stat as a means oas a means of atonement and reconciliation.⁵⁹ In referring to Leviticus 4, a general rule was down,down, One brings a sin offering for sins committed in igndown, One brings a sin offering for sins com committedcommitted willfully (Keriboth).⁶⁰ In all these kind of sins, however, the major factor In all these h andand reconciliation deand reconciliation depend reconciliation depended largely upon repentance for comm

⁵⁹ S. Schechter, Op. Cit. page 295.

⁶⁰ In the Babylonian Talmud, Seder Kodashin, I. Porusch, tr. (Op. Cit., 1948), pages 68, 69.

willful, willful, and then of willful, and then of willful, and then offering proper restitution where this was applicable. Wrongdoing, not only before God but also before fellow human being. In particular, however, after the Council of Nicaea, any sacrifices at the temple was possible; the way by which one attained righteousness at the temple was through repentance, prayer of confession, and restitution. The way by which one had sinned was through repentance, prayer of confession, and restitution of righteousness.

Nevertheless, under the Mosaic constitution, when people offered a sacrifice of sin offering, the possibility of being able to come to faith was present, the possibility of being able to come to faith was away. When belief was genuine in any belief. When belief was genuine, the offerer knew he had been forgiven (Psalm 103:12; Micah 7:19; and even with the ritual of atonement with the scapegoat). When the high priest had finished praying over the scapegoat, someone then took the goat, confessed the sins of the nation, someone then took the goat, walked it to a prescribed distance to make sure that it did not return and watching the scapegoat as it was led out, could not watch to face them anymore!

In the fullness of time, Yeshua died as our sacrifice. In the fullness of time, Yeshua died as our sacrifice. Consider when discussing Romans 3 and 5.

Psalm 51:5 (M.T., vs. 7)

Without question, this passage has been a difficult one to understand but upon close examination, it does provide an interesting dimension. The reverse has been especially popular with Christian expositors. The doctrine of original sin.⁶¹

Tate also mentions alternative explanations concerning this passage, The sin involved in Genesis 3. He cites Kaufmann who argued that sexual desire is the archetypal sin in Genesis 3.⁶²

⁶¹ Marvin E. Tate, Word Biblical Commentary, Psalms 51-100, Vol. II, (Dallas, TX: Word Books, Publisher, 1990), page 18.

⁶² Y. Kaufmann, The Religion of Israel, from its Beginnings to the Babylonian Exile, M. Greenberg, tr. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1969), pages 293-294.

The passages in verses 13 and 14 serves to strength The passages in verses 13 and 14 serves to strength The passages in
in an end note on verse 14,

Traditional Christian doctrine has frequently understood Adam's sin to be generic (or genetic) and to infect all future generations with sinfulness: Human beings sin because they are descendants from Adam, and are genetically sinful in that his sin nature was passed to them. This clause is the closest support in the text for this doctrine. Paul directly addresses the issue of passage remains within this sphere of a digression very cautiously established.⁶⁵

This statement is interesting because in most cases, Shulam Rabbinic doctrine of yeser har a and yeser hatov, or from the influence in the Qumran literature with the concept of the concept of Two Ways, where a person not only has the inclination to within, but is also acted upon by two principles from outside what is good and uplifting.

Nevertheless, as Shulam asserts on Romans 3:25,

The blood of the bull and of the scapegoat effected atonement Israel. Paul therefore describes Yeshua here as ((the mercy seat) of atonement, since his blood was poured out to atone for those who are faithful to him (cf. Psalms 32:1, 85:2, Heb. 9:12, 13:12).⁶⁶

But the question can be raised: Is the atonement of Yeshua which leads to the acts committed by a person?

Other areas of Romans 3, 5-8, are presence of sin as a state of being. But this writer feels that there is a good argument for the presence of sin as both an act as well as a state of being

Additional Statements

It is helpful to also note a number of passages with Scripture which se possibility of sin as a state of being:

Jeremiah 17:9 -- The heart is deceitful -- The heart is deceitful about understand it? Something is resident in the heart of a person that forces us to realize the acts of sin.

⁶⁵ Shulam, Op. Cit., footnote 36, page 206.

⁶⁶ Shulam, Op. Cit., Page 144.

or later under the New Covenant with the Messor later under the New Covenant with the Messor later under are able to find an atonement for their sins and be declared righteous by God.

The tragic observation is that no amount of good deeds, while The tragic observation is that no amount of living within a living within a society is concerned, can earn for us any righteousness from the God who is ho plain Biblical fact is that a barrier exists beplain Biblical fact is that the only way it can be circumvented is the only way it can be circumvented is through the sin othe only and Eve to be brought back again into the fellowship of God s will. All of the good deedand Eve to be brought on the horizontal level before mankind can never be the substitute for what on the horizontal level before justification on the vertical level

Rabbinic theology counters by saying that if man has a sin nature, he grips of sin as a state, and is not free to make his choices of choosing what is the good thing tgrrips of sin. But, even though humankind is underBut, even though humankind is under the soul, with the possibility of making the right choisoul, with the possibility of making the right choice outwardly and helpful to everyone outwardly and helpful to everyone around himoutwardly and helpful to everyone around him. And yet, man is not as free as he or she thinks.

So, the tragedy still remains: What makes the human being a person a sinn So, the tragedy still remains wrong acts of sin? As already noted in Leviticus chapter 4, wrong acts of sin? As already noted in Leviticus and not even realize it, onland not even realize it, only points up the fact that there is something sin nature within every human being. Certainly, Paul did not derive this thinking fromsin nature within sources which in many cases were quicksources which in many cases were quick theology from the Tanak, or the Hebrew scriptures, both the sin nature of sin.

Therefore we conclude that yesser har cannot be the sole reason why m though a person may live the good life before society God on the vertical level. Only when a person responds to or she know the freedom that comes when the sin nator she know the and where He will also have the power over the acts ofand where He will also have the power over the acts
8.